

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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February 6, 2006

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State Patrol Encourages Citizens to Report Erratic Vehicles

Hundreds of thousands of people call 9-1-1 the universal number to dial for emergencies. Many times the caller is personally involved in the emergency; but, that's not always the case. Concerned citizens also call 9-1-1 to report situations that can result in serious or life threatening injuries. They want authorities to know there is a need for rapid enforcement or emergency medical response.

Some people, however, are reluctant to call 9-1-1. The Washington State Patrol encourages you to call 9-1-1 to report erratically driven vehicles. These may be vehicles that cross the center line, follow too closely, travel across lanes or exhibit other reckless driving. Unless you know for sure don't try to determine the cause. What may appear to be a drunk driver could actually be someone falling asleep, under the influence of illegal drugs or on prescription medication. It doesn't matter because they are all unsafe. It's very important to report the location and direction of travel, vehicle description and license plate, and actions of the vehicle. Also give your call back number. You are not required to remain on the line, speed or attempt to pursue the erratic vehicle. If you can safely follow behind, however, it may be helpful to give updates until an officer is able to respond.

The State Patrol aggressively enforces a variety of reckless driving violations; but, troopers can't always be at the right place at the right time. Having the additional "eyes and ears" of concerned citizens who report erratically driven vehicles is not only the right thing to do, but also will help reduce or mitigate potentially dangerous situations.

"Last year alone we arrested almost 134,000 drivers for driving under the influence, lane travel, crossing the centerline and other unsafe driving," Chief John R. Batiste said. "There are many more out there, and we appreciate all the help citizens provide to assist us in getting them off the road before they cause harm," he explained.

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